



**St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council**

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*Approved*

**MEETING MINUTES**

**September 15, 2010 7:00 PM**

**Room 226, County Courthouse, 48 Court Street**

**Canton, New York**

*Action items in bold italics*

- 1. Call to Order:** D. Katz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.
- 2. Roll Call, Determination of Quorum:** A quorum was present.  
Members present included: T. Cutter, B. Flavin, A. Heidenreich, R. Horst, D. Howard, G. Johnson, D. Katz, L. Perry, J. Rosales, L. Rudiger, P. Skomsky, A. Soutar.  
Members absent included: G. Hart, D. O'Shea, B. Zimmerman.  
Staff: J. Montan, J. Tenbusch.  
Guests: Donald Hassig; S. Rau.  
Press: None.
- 3. Hearings, Comments from the Public:** D. Katz asked if any guest wished to make a comment; Donald Hassig asked to speak. Hassig distributed a 2-page paper on Chlorinated Dibenzo-p-Dioxins, prepared in 1999 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service (copy attached to these minutes). Hassig informed the EMC that he intended to set up a table in the County Human Services Center with information on persistent organic pollutants (POPs). He asked for the EMC to help him educate the public about the risks of long-term exposure to POPs.

Jon Montan and John Tenbusch spoke about the Adirondack SmartGrowth project. This utilizes a grant from DEC to develop a Web-based publication, "User's Guide to the Adirondacks in St. Lawrence County". This publication compiles information about all NYS-owned lands, lands upon which NYS has purchased easements, as well as St. Lawrence County-owned reforestation areas. The "User's Guide" organizes this information according to Unit Management Plans (UMPs), which in St. Lawrence County include Aldrich Pond; Cranberry Lake; DeBar Mountain; Eastern Five Ponds Access Primitive Area; Five Ponds; Grasse River; Horseshoe Lake; Raquette Boreal; Round Lake; White Hill.

**EMC: Everybody Must Care!**

In addition, the “User’s Guide” will include information by community of those businesses and services that might be used by persons who use public lands. Such businesses might include but not be limited to wilderness outfitters, camping stores, boat rentals, and vacation homes; contractors, septic tank services; restaurants, taverns, groceries; etc. Planning staff have conducted presentations at all Town Board meetings for towns in the Adirondack Park, including Clare; Clifton; Colton; Fine; Hopkinton; Lawrence; Parishville; Piercefield; Pitcairn. Three additional presentations will be scheduled for general audiences: in Parishville, Piercefield, Star Lake.

Montan estimated that the “User’s Guide to the Adirondack Park in St. Lawrence County” would be available on the Web by mid-November.

4. **Acceptance of Order of Business, Items for New Business, Items for Unfinished Business:** The Order of Business was accepted by consensus. Hassig’s request for assistance by the EMC was added to New Business by consensus.
5. **Approval of the Minutes of the July 2010 Meeting:** The July minutes were approved as amended (A. Heidenreich; B. Flavin).
6. **Report by the Representative of the Board of Legislators (BOL):** Laura Perry reported:
  - The Board of Legislators is preparing a contract for the newly-independent Industrial Development Agency (IDA). Asked about the IDA, Perry explained that some County legislators felt that an independent IDA can provide better economic development services around the County than as a County department. Perry noted that the Board of Legislators will maintain some level of control over the IDA through their power to appoint members to the IDA.
  - The ad hoc Information/Technology (IT) Committee is being institutionalized as an advisory board to the Board of Legislators.
  - The County’s 2011 budget looks bad. Expenditures in 2010 might exceed revenues by over \$1 million. Sales tax receipts are still down from last year’s levels.
7. **Reports by EMC Members on Conversations with County Legislators:**
  - A. Soutar spoke with those County legislators who visited his home as part of the St. Lawrence County Ag Tour on August 20<sup>th</sup>.
8. **Report of the Committees:**
  - a. **Executive** – D. Katz. No report.
  - b. **Education** – J. Tenbusch reported for the Committee that:
    - EMC Chair David Katz had appointed Jon Rosales as Education Committee Chair, replacing Roy Horst.
    - The Committee reviewed a draft resolution drafted by Donald Hassig. This

resolution would commit the Board of Legislators to conduct local efforts to educate the public about the hazards of continual exposure to persistent organic pollutants; request state and federal officials to prepare and conduct similar educational efforts, and commend Cancer Action for its efforts to raise awareness of the problem. *The Committee decided to not recommend that the EMC forward this draft resolution to the BOL;* instead, the Committee was reminded that at its July meeting, the EMC agreed to develop a public presentation on the hazards of exposure to POPs.

- As new Committee chair, J. Rosales proposed that the Committee re-organize its Work Plan tasks. He suggested that, at Committee meetings, members would consider current work items; new business; organizational matters. He asked Committee members to review the Education Committee's Work Plan and determine their priorities for Committee action.
- Regarding speakers for future EMC meetings, D. Howard and J. Tenbusch will put together a presentation on Emerald Ash Borers for the October meeting. In November, someone from the Raquette River Blueway Corridor will discuss their activities. In early 2011, Jeffrey Chiarenzelli of SLU will speak about his drinking water research.

c. **Natural Resources** – A. Heidenreich reported that the Committee had:

- Directed staff to investigate other counties' actions related to groundwater withdrawal. A question was asked: why is the Committee interested in this issue, since there has been no interest expressed by the Board of Legislators? Heidenreich responded that the Committee intends to be pro-active on this issue; the Committee is aware of recent proposals in other nearby counties to take large quantities of groundwater.
- Discussed the draft resolution by D. Hassig (discussed above); took no action.
- Discussed the Rooftop Highway proposal; took no action.
- Discussed the proposed dam in Massena- this project has been withdrawn by Massena Electric Department (MED)
- Discussed the elimination of cormorants from American Island in the St. Lawrence River.
- P. Skomsky will attend the Great Lakes Restoration Fund conference, and make a report at the next Committee meeting.

d. **NYSAEMC** – No report.

**9. Report of the Staff:**

- J. Montan reported on progress with the Climate Action Plan: he is drafting the text of the document; several snags have occurred with the data sets; the analysis of the data is on hold pending resolution of these technical issues.

- J. Tenbusch reported that the County Planning Office had received word at the end of August that the four applications submitted for Community Development Block Grant assistance (3 housing rehab; 1 homeownership) were funded, for a total of \$1.95 million.
- Montan announced that the Biomass Boot Camp would take place on Friday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, at SUNY Canton. This event is aimed at industrial or commercial users. Montan also announced that he would be making a presentation on biomass at the Local Government Conference at SUNY Potsdam on October 12<sup>th</sup>.

**10. Unfinished Business:** Regarding D. Hassig's request for assistance. L. Rudiger commented that if the EMC associates itself publicly with D. Hassig, its reputation and credibility would be damaged. L. Perry asked about the County's policy for outside groups to set up information tables in County buildings; no one present knew the policy. D. Howard suggested that the EMC should defer to the Public Health Department on this issue; PH staff should be knowledgeable on the topic, and PH is located in the human Services Building, where the information table was proposed. *The EMC took no action on Hassig's request for assistance.* J. Tenbusch was asked to communicate with Hassig on this matter.

**11. New Business:**

- P. Skomsky commented on the recent announcement by Massena Electric Department to withdraw their proposal to construct a new hydro dam on the Grasse River; he felt that the withdrawal of the dam project was a benefit to the environment, in spite of the blame assigned to environmentalists by the dam project sponsors.
- L. Rudiger reported that he had attended a recent RVRDA meeting in Waddington; he commented that the RVRDA members had been confused by the presentation made by J. Montan about EMC recommendations about making funding decisions. Rudiger felt that the RVRDA was looking for specific proposals with specific costs that they could decide whether to fund.
- L. Rudiger commented on the ex officio status of L. Perry as an EMC member appointed by the Board of Legislators. *Staff were asked to look into the issue.*

**12. Announcements:**

- A. Heidenreich announced that the Energy Task Force has established a speaker's bureau.
- J. Montan announced that the Local Living Festival will be held on Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> at the CCE Learning Farm in Canton. A. Heidenreich, R. Horst volunteered to staff an EMC table.

**13. Message to Board of Legislators:** No specific message was proposed.

**14. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Minutes prepared by J. Tenbusch

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